

LIBRARY SERVICE TO LABOR

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LABOR FILMS IN LIBRARIES

By Sally Parker, Coordinator, Film Utilization Service, Labor Education Division, Roosevelt College, Chicago

Recently, a very attractive new catalog of films from a metropolitan public library came to my attention. This library is serving one of the largest industrial cities in our country, a city with a trade union membership of over half a million. I was surprised to find, in an otherwise well selected group of films, only one film made by a labor union. There were films for children, films on adult hobbies, films on sports, travelogs, films on the training of supervisory employees, and one labor film. Some of the films listed in human relations and other areas were already being used by union people. I found it difficult to understand why more labor films had not been included.

As I thought about it, it occurred to me that a film librarian might have one of a number of points of view on the matter. First, she might suspect, without having seen any, that labor films simply do not measure up to other films in artistic and technical merit and in general interest. Hence, they should not be considered for inclusion in a limited budget. She might feel that unions don't use the library and that she would be buying films for a phantom consumer. Or she might simply feel that she knows nothing about the labor movement and, therefore, is not in a position to judge a film's usefulness.

These are all very understandable attitudes. Labor films, on the whole, do not compare favorably with the best documentaries. In my opinion, there has been no film yet produced which does justice to the struggle and accomplishments of the American labor movement. However, the best of the labor films do tell a compelling and dramatic story all their own and they tell it acceptably well. Surely everyone must know by now that there has been world-wide praise for the AFL Ladies' Garment Workers' film, "With These Hands." Other labor films are less world-shaking and more utilitarian. This is a strength as well as a weakness. It means that your library cannot buy labor films which are great documentaries. However, you can buy films which will help your local labor groups with some of the problems they face. Your efforts to assist union people will help to stimulate interest in the library and its work from people who have, perhaps, never before made use of the library's services or been aware of its facilities. Your labor patrons, who make up a considerable group of citizens in any city, will not be phantoms long, if you do a good job of letting them know that you have labor films. This can be done by making the acquaintance of the officers of the Central Labor Union (NAT) and the Industrial Union Council (CIO) in your city, and arranging a mailing, if possible, of your

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labor film list through their facilities.

Ideally, the leaders of your city-wide labor bodies should be contacted before you have made any final selection of films. They should be asked to appoint a joint AFL-CIO library committee to assist you in the selection of labor films. If you do not have time for the considerable work involved in making an initial selection of films to be shown to this committee, write to The Workers Education Bureau of the AFL or to the Education Department of the CIO, explaining the make-up of organized labor in your community and enumerating any special labor interests and problems which have come to your attention. They will suggest films for your purpose and, in all probability, send them to you free on a preview basis for your showing.

You will not know the particular problems of your local labor groups without scrutiny. It is often the case that in a community where the labor movement is well established and powerful, there is a deep concern on the part of the leaders about the lack of information among new members - information on labor's history and its accomplishments. On the other hand, in a community more recently unionized, there is an immediate need to train union members in the mechanics of unionism - parliamentary procedure, stewards' duties, structuring of the union, etc. You should make some effort to find out what the needs are before buying labor films.

On the matter of budget: a resourceful film librarian can often induce international unions that have produced films, to deposit a loan print. Your case is particularly good if there is substantial membership from that union in your area. I suggest this only for those with very limited budgets. As a matter of principle, I think a library should purchase its labor films just as it does any others.

Filmstrips should be given serious consideration, especially if the library can supply filmstrip equipment. With a transcription, most filmstrips sell for

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This Newsletter is issued by the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups of the American Library Association, the American Federation of Labor, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the policy or views of the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. Contributions of news and articles are welcomed by the editor. The new heading on the cover was designed by Hanspeter Johne, young German trade unionist studying at the University of Illinois

one-fifth the cost of the average movie film, and they pertain much more to tool subjects that are needed by unions. Filmstrips are particularly useful where union leaders are articulate about union problems and are able to lead discussion with the filmstrip, or where the library is able to supply a competent discussion leader.

After you have acquired your labor film library and have set it in operation, you will find your union film users an interesting and stimulating group. If you establish good rapport with key union officers, with editors of local labor papers, and with others interested in labor education, you will soon be doing a bustling business in advising on the selection of films as well as in supplying them for use. The library will have a new clientele and you will have the satisfaction of playing an important and rewarding part in helping the working citizens of your community who are labor union members.

I have found the following topical breakdown of films useful:

Labor History

LABOR'S CHALLENGE. Made by the American Federation of Teachers. A basic labor history filmstrip. (62 frames, color, with recording; WEB \$10)

UNITED ACTION FOR VICTORY. A powerful documentary movie of a historic CIO strike. (33 min.; apply UAW-CIO)

WITH THESE HANDS. Dramatic history of the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union from 1900 to the present. (50 min.; ILGWU \$100)

GOOD MEN AND TRUE. Filmstrip on the history of the Hatters Union and its early struggle. (50 frames, color, with recording; HIU \$25)

Union Meetings
(Better organization and running of local union meetings)

BROTHER JOHN. Shows the importance of attendance at union meetings. (10 min.; apply UAW-CIO)

MAKING THE UNION CLICK. Filmstrip promoting better union procedure and showing function of committees, executive boards, etc. (47 frames, with recording; WEB \$10)

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE. Simple, clear demonstration made with an adult group. (11 min.; Coronet \$50)

Stewards' Problems

SAGA OF 666. Cartoon filmstrip showing how the steward processes grievances and handles the shop troublemaker and the foreman. (15 min.; color, with recording; UAW-CIO \$20)

Collective Bargaining
(Bargaining committee do's and don'ts; organizational strategy)

LOCAL 100. Canadian film showing the organization of a union and the negotiating of a contract (32 min.; NFBC, approximately \$90)

Taft-Hartley Act

TAFT-HARTLEY. This movie cites three sections of the law which operate to obstruct labor. (15 min.; CIO, approximately \$20)

Accomplishments of Unions

OUR UNION - LOCAL 91. Ladies' Garment Workers' film showing benefits of unionization, particularly health and recreational facilities. (30 min.; color; apply ILGWU, 91)

WITH THESE HANDS. (See under Labor History)

PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. Gives overall picture of the services and functions of a big international union, the Amalgamated Meat Cutters, AFL. (35 min., color; apply AMC)

LABOR'S CHALLENGE. (See under Labor History)

LOCAL 100. (See under Collective Bargaining)

Organizing (The struggle to organize the unorganized)

PEOPLE OF THE CUMBERLAND. Shows union education work of the Highlander Folk School and the struggle in organizing unions in the South. (18 min.; Brandon \$90)

UNION AT WORK. Story of the CIO Textile Union, with emphasis on organizing southern workers. (24 min.; TWUA, approximately \$60)

IT HAPPENED IN DIXIE. Filmstrip showing the protection which the Federal Government (NIRB) offers workers who are attempting to organize. (44 frames, with recording; WEB \$15)

Human Relations

BROTHERHOOD OF MAN. Cartoon movie pointing up the likeness of all the world's people and the need to live together in one world. (11 min., color; Brandon \$100)

JOE DAVIS - AMERICAN. An eloquent plea for equal job opportunity, highlighting the plight of the young Negro professional worker. (15 min., CIO, approximately \$20)

MEN ON THE JOB. Describes the progress made by the AFL in San Francisco in stamping out job inequalities. Best with an AFL group. (81 frames, with recording; WEB \$10)

Industrial Safety

CARELESSNESS COSTS YOU. Union-sponsored film, dramatizing the price that a young working couple pays for failure to observe safety regulations. (15 min.; WEB \$10)

ACCIDENTS DON'T HAPPEN. Excellent series of six, 5-minute films showing the operation of a labor-management plant safety committee, and demonstrating proper techniques in lifting, loading, etc. (Apply UWF)

Health and Housing

HEALTHY, WEALTHY AND WISE. A lively cartoon filmstrip highlighting the benefits of a pre-payment group health center. Produced by United Productions for Kaiser Foundation. (72 frames, color, with recording; Brandon \$25)

TROWBRIDGE: A STORY OF HOUSING. The dramatic story of slum clearance in a defense area. (15 min.; CIO \$10)

Conservation

VALLEY OF THE TENNESSEE. Excellent film illustrating the value of people working together, through government and through farm cooperatives, to build a better life. The parallel in unionism is easily seen. (30 min.; TVA \$35.85)

Labor and World Problems

FATE OF A CHILD. This film awakens sympathy for people of the underdeveloped areas of the world, reviews their economic problems, and shows, briefly, the help which the UN is giving. Highly artistic production, original scores. (17 min.; apply UN)

ILO. Shows the operation of the International Labor Office in setting standards of health, safety, and welfare for workers throughout the world. 1948 revision. (11 min.; NFBC \$30)

ICFTU. Record of the first meeting in 1949 of the free world labor union organization. (25 min.; preview prints from WEB or CIO; purchase from ICFTU \$37.65)

Addresses of Film Sources Cited

AMC Amalgamated Meat Cutters, 2800 Sheridan Rd., Chicago 6.
Brandon Brandon Films, 100 W. 57th St., New York, 19.
CIO CIO Education Department, 718 Jackson Pl. N.W., Washington 6.
Coronet Coronet Instructional Films, Coronet Building, 65 E. Water St., Chicago 7.
Hatters Hatters, Cap & Millinery Workers International Union, 245 5th Ave., New York 16.
ICFTU International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, 20 W. 40th St., New York 18.
ILGWU, 91 International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, Local 91, 100 E. 17th St., New York.
ILO International Labor Office, 1262 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Washington 6.
NFBC National Film Board of Canada, 1270 6th Ave., New York 20.
TVA Tennessee Valley Authority, Knoxville, Tenn.
TWUA Textile Workers Union of America, 99 University Pl., New York 3.
UAW-CIO United Automobile Workers, CIO, 8000 E. Jefferson St., Detroit 14.
UN United Nations, Film Division, United Nations, New York.
UWF United World Films, 1445 Park Ave., New York 22.
WEB Workers Education Bureau, AFL, 1525 H St., N.W., Washington 5.

Editor's Note: The following film directories and film guides may be useful in selecting labor films:

Films for Labor. Workers Education Bureau, AFL, 1525 H St., N. W., Washington 5. 1952. 29p. 25¢ (Annotated list of films and filmstrips useful in labor union programs. Includes film discussion suggestions)

Films for Labor and How to Use Them. CIO Department of Education and Research, Film Division, 718 Jackson Pl., N. W., Washington 6. 1950. 36p. 25¢. (Annotated list of films and filmstrips useful in labor union programs. Includes checklist for planning a film showing)

Services of the CIO Department of Education and Research. The Department, 718 Jackson Pl., N. W., Washington 6. 1953. 20p. 15¢. (Includes section on how to use films and advice on selecting a projector)

A Guide to Audio-Visual Materials in Industrial and Labor Relations by J. J. Jehring. New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y. Bulletin 22, 1952. 56p. 25¢. (A list of films, filmstrips, and recordings used by management, unions, and educators)

Films on International Relations for Union Audiences. American Friends Service Committee, Labor-International Affairs Program, 20 S. 12th St., Philadelphia. 1951. 40p. Apply. (Includes an evaluation sheet for each film)

Show a Labor Movie. Film Service, Labor Education Division, Roosevelt College, 430 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago 5. (Annotated list of films and advice on planning film programs) 1953. 17p. Apply.

News Letter. Workers Education Bureau, AFL, 1525 H St., N. W., Washington 5. (This monthly publication frequently contains lengthy and critical reviews of new labor films) \$1 a year.

JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN CHICAGO

At a meeting of the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups, held February 5 during the ALA Midwinter meeting, Mildred Stibitz, Dayton Public Library, reported on the proposed Handbook on Library Services to Labor Groups, of which she is editor. Four of the six chapters have been completed and special efforts are to be made to get the remaining two manuscripts as soon as possible.

The Board discussed ways in which members might assist public librarians who request information on establishing a program of service to labor unions. Sally Parker, Labor Division of Roosevelt College, met with the Board to suggest ways in which public librarians might assist unions in developing film programs for their membership. Plans for a program for the Los Angeles conference were also discussed. Joseph Mire, executive secretary of the Inter-university Labor Education Committee, represented John D. Connors of the AFL who was unable to attend.

LIBRARY SERVICES BILL INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS

Support of librarians and of organized labor is urged for the Library Services Bill, introduced in Congress in January (S. 94 sponsored by Senators Aiken, Douglas, and Hill; H.R. 255 sponsored by Congressman Elliott.) The Library Services Bill (and ten other identical bills introduced since then) is aimed at stimulating local and state interest in improving and extending public library service to rural areas now without such services or with inadequate service. The Bill provides Federal assistance for a five year period. Under the provisions of the bill each State would be allotted, on a matching basis, \$40,000 plus an additional sum based on its rural population and its per capita income. The program would be administered by State Library agencies.

CIO LOCAL UNIONS AND THEIR COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

(The following statement appears in the new CIO booklet, Services of the CIO Department of Education and Research.)

A joint CIO-AFL-American Library Association Committee has been set up to help your community libraries develop library services that are helpful to labor. Write to the CIO Department of Education and Research for information on programs that are being carried on by unions and libraries.

Do you know what library services are available in your community? To find out:

- (1) Check with your public library to see what books they have about labor which might be of interest to members of your union. Let your members know about books that they can borrow.

Your local library can give you a number of services besides lending books: they have subscriptions to magazines and newspapers; they have reference services that will help you locate material on any subject you are interested in. City libraries are developing film collections of movies and filmstrips which are available for loan.

- (2) Check with your public school libraries to find out what books they have on the labor movement.
- (3) Check with your state library about the possibility of borrowing books for your local union.

NEWS FROM LIBRARIES AND UNIONS

Omaha Public Library recently announced the creation of a new Business and Industrial Department and notified unions and companies in the community of the library's plan to expand its collection and its services in the field of industrial relations. Special attention was called to the library's new looseleaf labor services for use in connection with collective bargaining.

Baltimore Teachers Union has recently taken part in developing a "Labor Activities Workshop" for teachers. This is in connection with a Community Study program in Baltimore sponsored by the city Department of Education. According to Milton Goldberg of the Union, who was asked to head the workshop, teachers choose work in special interest fields such as local history, housing, recreation, transportation, industry,

youth problems, government, health, and labor. Under the program, teachers will visit union headquarters and will attend meetings of local unions, city central bodies, arbitration hearings, and collective bargaining sessions, if possible. "It is hoped," writes Goldberg, "that the workshop will lead to enlightenment in this long-neglected field of community activity and will also promote curriculum building in the field of labor." Such a project suggests possibilities of programs with school librarians and possible public librarians.

New York Public Library has started a new service to labor - a monthly annotated list of books and pamphlets entitled Pointers which is sent to unions in the metropolitan area. The first issue (January) was entitled "Read about Your Labor Movement," the second (February), "Read About Your Neighbors and Brothers". Through this list, Dorothy Kuhn Oko, in charge of the program, hopes to bring union people into the library for further information and guidance.

Boston Public Library prepared an attractive book list on "Union Activities and Chemistry" for distribution at an AFL Chemical Workers convention in Boston in February. At one of the sessions Mrs. Helen F. Hirson, extension librarian, described the Library's service to unions. Mrs. Hirson also prepared a book list and exhibit for the State CIO convention and sent book deposits to the Catholic Labor Guild and to the Labor-Management Center, St. Joseph's Retreat League. In case you missed it, the "Pictorial Choice" of the month in Library Journal for November 15, 1952, depicts the presentation of a group of labor records by the Jewish Labor Committee to the Boston Public Library on the occasion of Labor Day.

Irvine L. H. Kerrison of Rutgers has resigned as a member of the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. He will serve as labor advisor to the chief of mission, Mutual Security Agency, Bangkok, Thailand and will be there about two years.

Workers Education was the subject of a symposium in the November 1952 issue of Adult Education. Participants were: Eleanor G. Coit and Orlie A. H. Pell of the American Labor Education Service; Irvine L. H. Kerrison, Institute of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University; and Larry Rogin, Textile Workers Union of America. Eleanor Coit and Orlie Pell are also authors of an informative report on the experimental International Labor Seminar which took place on the University of Connecticut campus last fall under the sponsorship of the American Labor Education Service and the CIO. The article appears in the January 1953 issue of the News Bulletin of the Institute of International Education.

Effey L. Riley, member of the workers education staff of the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell, is at present visiting the various universities that conduct extension programs with unions, in connection with a grant from the Adult Education Fund. Rebecca Camp of the Free Public Library Commission of Vermont reported on her traveling internship experiences at the Midwinter ALA convention. She is the first librarian to receive a grant from the Adult Education Fund for a visiting internship. As soon as word is received concerning application for next year's internships this Newsletter will report the requirements so that any librarian or union education worker that is interested in studying public library services to labor groups might apply.